

REMARKS

Claims 15 and 27 have been amended to recite that reactor is in fluid communication with an alkali hydroxide source, a contaminated alkali halide source, and a chlorine gas source. Claim 21 has been amended to recite a depleted alkali chloride source. The amendments are supported by the Figures and the accompanying description in the specification.

The pending claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by several references. Specifically, Claims 15, 16, and 19 – 27 have been rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,062,654 to Shigeyasu et al. and by JP Abstract JP 63-245979 to Fujii et al.; Claims 15 and 21 – 27 have been rejected as being anticipated by EP 0094718 to Lohrberg et al.; Claims 15, 21 – 25, and 27 have been rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,743,707 to Iwase et al. and by U.S. Patent No. 4,246,252 to McDermott et al..

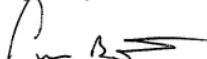
To further clarify the invention, independent Claims 15 and 27 have been amended to recite that the reactor vessel is in fluid communication with an alkali hydroxide source, a contaminated alkali halide source, and a chlorine gas source. None of the cited references disclose or suggest a reaction vessel that is in fluid communication with an alkali hydroxide source, a contaminated alkali halide source, and a chlorine gas source. Accordingly, Claims 15 and 27 and any claims dependent thereon are patentable over the cited references.

It is respectfully submitted that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) have been overcome and that all pending claims 15, 16, and 19 - 27 are now in condition for immediate allowance and an early notification of the allowability of these claims is earnestly solicited. If any matters remain to be resolved, the Examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone at 704-444-1185 to expedite prosecution of this application.

Appl. No.: 10/812,048
Amdt. dated 07/14/2006
Reply to Office action of 04/17/2006

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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